Separate budget for agriculture

†3050. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring an independent and separate agriculture budget;

(b) if so, the details thereof and to what extent the matter has progressed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government.

(c) The matters relating to the agriculture are included in the State List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution. The primary responsibility of implementation of policies and programmes for development of agriculture, therefore, lies with the State Governments. The role performed by the Central Government is essential only supplementary in nature. There is, therefore, no felt need to present a separate Union Budget for agriculture.

NCF report on farmers' suicide

3051. PROF P. J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission on Farmers has brought out a report on the farmers' suicides in the country;

(b) if so, the salient findings thereof;

(e) whether any suggestions were also made to stem the tide of rising number of farmers' suicides in the country; and

(d) the details of such suggestions made by the Commission and the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The National Commission on

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Farmers has in its Third Report indicated, on the basis of field visit to the Vidarbha Region of Maharashtra, *inter alia,* the following factors for suicides being committee by farmers:—

* Damage caused by unsasonal rain;
* High cost of inputs and unremunerative output prices;
* Lack of sufficient irrigation facilities and lowering of water table due to unsustainable exploitation of the aquifer;
* Spurious inputs including seeds of Bt. cotton;
* Usurious interest rate of loans charged by moneylenders;
* Low porductivity factor due to poor soil health; and
* Lack of farmer-friendly insurance scheme;

In its Second Report, the Commission recommended various measures relating to credit and Insurance, irrigation and cropping pattern, inputs, agriculture marketing and prices in order to avoid the tragedy of farmers' suicides.

The Government has identified 31 Districts in the States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala where the incidence of farmers' suicide has been very high and has decided to launch a special rehabilitation package to mitigate the distress of farmers. The package, *inter alia,* provides for debt relief to farmers, enhanced credit flow, interest waiver, assured irrigation facilities, watershed development, horticulture, development, micro-irrigation, extension services and subsidiary income oportunities. The Rehabilitation Package for Maharashtra was announced on 01 July, 2006.

Modernization of agriculture system in Punjab

3052. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any sum has been allocated to Punjab during the last three years for modernizing the agricultural system; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of funds